the RARS Exciter
Raleigh Amateur Radio Society
RARS
Worldwide Friendship
June/July, 2002
Number 376

Photos by KN4BS

DAYTON HAMFEST

BY Bert WA4TLI

Friday's weather was cold and rainy. Saturday was cold and windy and Sunday was cold and not quite as windy.

The attendance was down particularly on Friday and overall it was not as crowded. There were some empty booths inside and there were some empty spaces in the flea market area. Generally there wasn't as much traffic.

A new addition this year was the portable emergency equipment displays. There were several mobile crankup tower displays and the emergency communications vans outside the main entrance were impressive.

There was a wedding this year of two hams Saturday in the chandelier room. This was a "big" event and got front page local media coverage.

The mobile goat camera in the flea market was replaced by a mobile rooster cam with live coverage on the Internet.

There wasn't much new equipment there except for the new Ten Tec Orion transceiver (still not released) and the Yaesu VX7R in an underwater display (The unit was actually on receiving in an underwater aquarium). The new Yaesu FT1000 Field was on display. Kenwood had an emergency communications package as their feature which included a boxed up portable repeater and HTs with all the cables and power supplies for deployment during emergencies. Icom had their enhanced IC756PROII on display.

There were several dealers with mobile screwdriver type antennas. There was some unusual interest in the Yaesu FT817 group.

Prices overall were down again. The dealers slashed prices Saturday and their supplies were adequate. AES and HRO stayed busy all day but slacked off late Saturday and all day Sunday. Other dealers were busy but not overwhelmed. Heil had their new Proset Plus boom headset on display. The MFJ factory booth stayed busy even though they were selling products at list price versus discounted prices by their dealers. The Yaesu FT1000 Field was going for $1700 and the Icom IC756PROII was $2400. The VX5R was $210 this year.

Ford had their hybrid electric car on display. The Red Cross emergency communications Humvee returned and there was a communications Jeep on display.

The ARRL booth was very evident with many staffers from Newington including Dave Sumner.

The typical celebrities were there including Gordon West, Marti Laine, OH2BH (big time DXer), Martin F. Jue (Mr. MFJ), Don Search (former DXCC desk manager), Al Waller (runs QSL.net), and Bob W4DR, this years DeSoto award winner.

Mike KN4BS outside in the flea market—40 degrees!

DAYTON HAMFEST
MAY 16-18, 2003
PLAN NOW!!

The Exciter

The ***Exciter*** is the monthly newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It is available in both printed and electronic form.
The printed version is mailed to members just before each club meeting. The electronic form, in Adobe Acrobat PDF format, is e-mailed about a week earlier.

We solicit both articles and advertising. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of the prior month. Contact the Editor.

The views contained in the Exciter are those of the individual authors, and are not necessarily the views of the Editor, or the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society.

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, we incorporated a new RARS, and obtained 501(c)(3) Non-Profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friend-ship through Amateur Radio; to be of public service by
providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique; and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining Amateur Radio licenses.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are $18.00 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay $5.00 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are $12.00 per year. Dues for non-licensed Associate members are $9.00 per year.

Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer, or the RARS web site (www.rars.org).

Officers

President:	**Bernard Blackmon W4BRB** **919-467-8719** bernardb@mindspring.com
Vice-President:	**Bob Breyer K1RCB** **919-848-7761** breyer@ix.netcom.com
Secretary:	**Jim Walter KG4FIJ** **919-468-5358** jwalter@nc.rr.com
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Info

Repeaters:
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224.64
444.525 (88.5 PL)

Web Site:
http://www.rars.org

It's time again for membership renewals. The website has the application at www.rars.org. An application is also available at the RARS meeting. Membership cards will be available upon request. We hope to see you at the meeting in July.

The meeting topic will be EOC hurricane preparedness and update on field day.

NEXT RARS MEETING: Tuesday, July 2nd

Hurricane Preparedness Fair

Saturday, June 29, 2002– 9:00-3:00 pm
Where: Lowes parking lot on Hwy 70, Glenwood Ave.
Wake County ARES and SKYWARN will participate as the Red Cross and Lowes sponsor a Hurricane Preparedness Fair. Hams are needed to help set up the display, operate and explain ham radio to the public.

See the Wake ARES and SKYWARN web sites for information:

www.wakesares.org
www.ccskywarn.net

Or Contact: Gary Pearce KN4AQ at KN4AQ@arrl.net
Thomas Babb KF4JKQ at kf4jkq@arrl.net

Cary ARC Midsummer Swapfest

From Keith Zeringue, W4KAZ

The 30th annual Cary mid-summer Swapfest will be on Saturday, July 20th, 2002. The location is the Downtown Cary Community Center (The Herb C. Young Community Center) at 404 North Academy Street, on the corner of North Academy and Chapel Hill Road, adjacent to the Town Hall Campus. Doors will open to the public at 8:00 am. Tickets at the door will be $5.00.The indoor area is AIR CONDITIONED. The Cary club would like to invite all interested parties to attend. Indoor table pre-registrations are $10.00 per table, $4.00 per admission ticket. The pre-registration deadline is July 9th.

For more information, email N4NC@arrl.net or K4IWW@attglobal.net. The Cary club website is http:/www.qsl.net/n4nc/ and includes a link to an image of the pre-registration form.

TECH/TRADER NET
8:30 PM SATURDAY ON 64

RARS General Meeting Minutes - June 4, 2002

The meeting was called to order at 7:37 pm by President Bernard Blackmon W4BRB. Bernard introduced several visitors.

Neal Fisher N4HAF spoke about Field Day. Things are ready, including food and a porta-potty. He still needs a Band Captain for 20 CW. Looks like the operation will be 6A plus VHF. No "GOTA" station band captain has volunteered.

Bernard announced the Winston-Salem hamfest is June 8.

Bernard announced that the Exciter is back. Denyse KG4CXR has published her first one, and is working on the next issue. She asks club members to contribute articles to the Exciter.

Treasurer Greg Seamster KE4PAX presented the treasurer's report. At the end of the fiscal year, the club stands at 320 members, and dues are now due. A Financial Review was conducted on May 30th. Greg also presented the 2002-2003 budget, as approved by the RARS Board, for vote by the club. He explained the line items for income and expenses (copies of the budget are available to club members - contact the Treasurer). The budget was approved by the membership.

Frank KA2FWC said the grounding at the Bayleaf repeater site has been completed, and he will now move forward on installing the new club repeaters. Gary Pearce KN4AQ said the latest Repeater Journal was out. He also said that Wake County ERED will be participating in the Red Cross/Lowes Hurricane Preparedness Fair on June 29.

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Finally, Gary said that there will probably not be a RARS Tech license class in July, and said he needs another instructor or two before the next class, either in the fall or next winter.

PROGRAM:

John Guerriero KG4HDT, ARES EC for NC Emergency Management presented a program on what's happening in ARES at the State EOC. Tom Brown N4TAB, Wake County ARES EC, discussed Wake County ARES and the power connector that is now recommended for North Carolina ARES - the Anderson PowerPole 30 Amp connector. The connectors are not available locally, so ARES will make a mass purchase and sell them at cost to ARES members (about $1 per connector). Scott KD5ORW announced that he will be returning to Oklahoma, and thanked the hams in Raleigh for making him feel welcome.

Door Prizes won by: WD4MGP, KB4RZ, AD4RC, KD4ISC, KD4PBJ, K4DAM, KB5ZIH, WA9SZL.

Meeting adjourned: 8:49 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Pearce KN4AQ, one-time secretary

Minutes of the RARS April Board Meeting

The monthly Board meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was held at the Forest Hills Baptist Church on April 16. The meeting was called to order by President Bernard Blackmon W4BRB at 7:35 PM. Members present were: W4BRB, KG4CXR, KG4FIJ, K4HF, K4HM, KE4PAX, NI4S, KF4UQZ, WA2UZO, AC4ZO. The total attendance was 12.

On motion by K4HM and second by AC4ZO, the March 2002 Board Meeting minutes were approved.
Committee Reports:

VP Report – No report given.

FM Committee – W4BRB reported that the tower invoice issue has been taken care of.

Exciter – W4BRB reported we are still without an Exciter editor. This issue will be addressed after all Hamfest issues are finalized. Discussion ensued about possible candidates to run the Exciter, and possible changes in format.

Net Manager – KF4UQZ reported that she needs to have net reports to her by the 2nd of the following month. It was brought up that net reports can be given to anyone immediately following the net; doesn't have to be given directly to KF4UQZ. There was discussion about having a "net control minute" following each net for the purpose of discussing net protocol, etc.

Web Master – WA2UZO reported that the news page now has a self-archiving feature. He needs news articles to post on the web. Offered to design an addition to the net portion of the web page to include net controls, net rules/protocol, etc. Discussion ensued about the feasibility of posting other clubs'/organizations' events on the RARS web page.

Member Services – KG4CXR had nothing to report

Hamfest – K4HM gave some preliminary information about this year's event. He reported that attendance was 6 higher than last year's event. Tables were down from last year. Number of booths should be up from last year. Expenses should be down from last year. Overall a very smooth event.

NET REPORTS FOR MAY 2002

- 8:00PM DAILY: RARS Evening Net
- 9:00PM MON: SWL SIG
- 8:30PM SAT : Tech & Traders net

Total Net Activity:
Minutes: 922 in 33 sessions
Check-Ins: 457
Traffic Passed: 32 brought 27 passed

Field Day – W4BRB reported that he appointed Neal Fisher N4HAF as 2002 Field Day Chairman.

Public Information – No report.

Education – AC4ZO reported the Technician Class finished with 15 graduates with no dropouts. So far 14 have successfully taken the test. There is a possibility a class will be held this summer.

VE Team – Reported approximately 50-55 future hams took the test during Hamfest.

Public Service – No report.

ARRL Liaison – K4HF reported the possibility that some section info will be reduced in QST. Nothing definite as yet, but if it happens it will be a slow change.

W4DW/W4RNC Trustee – AC4ZO had nothing to report.

KE4PAX gave the Treasurer's Reports the total members is 307.

Unfinished Business

Video projector – KE4PAX reported that projector will not be available from Nortel.

Art Stratameyer's ham station – Mike Murphy WA4BPJ will take down the system as a personal technical challenge. RARS will provide assistance to dispose of the equipment if asked.

Future meetings at the church must end at 9:30 and the building vacated by 9:45 PM.

New Business

KE4PAX presented a first draft of the 2002-2003 budget. Discussion was held and changes recommended. Discussion will continue at the May meeting.

AC4ZO was given authority to assess the need for APRs setups for Club use. If there is a need, he may make the purchase, not to exceed the budgeted amount.

There were no member comments.

Upon motion by AC4ZO, meeting was adjourned at 9:35.

Respectfully submitted, Jim Walter KG4FIJ, Secretary.

MORE ON THE DAYTON HAMFEST

BY Dave Head K8DH

Dayton was, as usual, outstanding.

The Hamvention was less well attended than those that used to occur at the end of April, but that is a good thing for us. I'm sure it's not making as much money for DARA as those former Hamventions, but the lower attendance meant you could get close to things and see stuff.

You could actually get to touch the radios in the big-3 manufacturer's booths without elbowing people or standing in a line for 15 minutes.

I saw maybe 60% of the flea market by about noon on Friday. Then I came inside and stayed, since I was looking for stuff in there, and then it started raining so going outside would not have been productive - the vendors generally shut down during the rain except those with tents. It was a really cold rain, too, so unless you brought real good raingear and an array of cold weather clothing, you wouldn't have been comfortable.

On-site tickets were $22. Not too bad for 3 days, but much grumbling was heard about 3 things:

1) The programs don't come with the ticket any more - that essentially raised the price of the Hamvention to $27 unless you downloaded all the interesting forum info and vendor map info from the web site (not sure if the vendor map was available on the web).

2) The buses from the mall were $2 instead of free. Lotsa grumbling.

3) The private-owned parking across from the Hamvention went from $5 to $8 a day this year.

Other downers: The big tent at the corner of the flea market was replaced with several smaller tents. These smaller tents didn't have all that the big tent used to - Radio Shack, for instance.

A possible contributing reason for the lower participation - there was hype of extraordinary security measures - "no knives", "bomb sniffing dogs", etc. (I don't go places like that myself - too much hassle, as I routinely carry a pocket knife - and I think such measures are nonsense since many other things can be made into effective weapons) but then remembered that stuff like that is sold there, so such measures would be impossible - like "no guns" at a gun show... is a 1-1/4" combination wrench a weapon? Sure it is - and of course there was no such extensive security, although there were officers with dogs—they just were never seen sniffing anything. Probably ordinary K-9 units.

The common reason for less attendance that was heard was "Ebay".

My take on that is that you aren't going to get a new radio that goes for $899 at the Milwaukee AES for $699 from AES or Ebay like you can at the Hamvention. That was an example heard via "on the road" chatter as I was driving back to Virginia.

Conclusion: Dayton is still "The Big One" and is a more user-friendly Hamvention than ones of old that drew 37,000 people. Those were impossibly crowded.

Exhibit selling a system that can control an antenna tracking stars, planets, the moon & sun as well as Earth-bound satellites at the 2002 Dayton Hamvention

A Decade of Nets

By Dick KD4ISC

As I filed away the net logs for 2001 and prepared for the year ahead, I was reminded that February 2002 would mark ten years of conducting the RARS 8pm two meter net. I reached into the bottom desk drawer and pulled out the old net logs from the past. They brought back many fine memories for the decade that has gone by.

As I looked through these old papers, I realized I've called over 500 nets! A rough guess estimate shows I've logged over 6000 check-ins and manned more than seven days of radio time. Wow!

The logs also show some interesting notes about those that have checked in. We've enjoyed the announcement of births, marriages, graduations, new licenses, upgrades and new equipment to mention a few. The sadness of silent keys, lost pets, hurricanes and tornadoes has also been shared.

My longest net occurred after N4ZBB and many others at RARS coordinated the SAREX contact between the space shuttle and several local schools. There were 39 stations checking in to share their thoughts and experiences. We spent 54 minutes together that night. In contrast, my shortest net was 2 minutes long and only included me as the check in. This was one of several sparse nets that we had while the mighty 64 repeater was out of service and being relocated to its new tower.

The logs also reveal the dynamic group that enjoys our repeater. People have checked in while driving cars, motorcycles, bikes and boats. There have been walkers, campers and fishermen checking in. Travelers at the airport and passengers moving through on the Amtrak have also joined us. We've had visitors from many of our states. The net has taken an international flavor with visitors from Canada, England and Switzerland. We've had coffee klatches, cookie samplings and shared 10 Thanksgiving holidays together.

I have learned a lot and gained many friends and new acquaintances from calling the net. I look forward to each Thursday's edition and am thankful for those who take time out to join me. Stop by sometime and say "Hello." I hope to be calling and listening to the net for many more Thursdays to come. '73'

IS THERE ANY SUCH THING AS TECHNICAL SUPPORT?

By Hank Montgomery

I decided to switch from Road Runner to Earthlink for internet access for several reasons, spam filtering being one of the main drivers, as well as unlimited free dial-up access as a back up to the cable service or as a way to access my account when away from home. This would mean I could drop the AOL account I maintained for backup internet access. I am still trying to decide if it was worth it.

I contacted Earthlink by phone with several questions before making a decision. One item of importance was whether I would miss any email during the switch and while I got my email address changed at the redirection service I use. This could be avoided by either having access to both accounts, or by having Road Runner forward my mail to Earthlink for a day or two. I was assured that this would not be a problem and when the time came to switch the account I would be given instructions on how I could access both accounts.

Deciding to go ahead with the order, I filled out an online application on Friday evening after supper. Early Monday afternoon I got an email from Jamie at Earthlink saying that they had been unable to reach me at my home phone number (although my caller-id did not register any phone calls) and providing an 800 number where I could reach them to complete my application. I called Jamie at the number provided and completed the order, after which Jamie asked if I had any further questions. I told him of my concern about losing any email during the switchover and asked if he knew how it would be handled. He didn't know but assured me that a support tech would be calling within 72 hours to switch me over to Earthlink and he would be able to answer my questions. About an hour later I received an email confirming my order and notifying me that someone from Time Warner would be contacting me within 5 business days.

The next evening when I got home from work there was an email waiting from Time Warner asking me to go to their web page and schedule an installation time. There was also a number provided in case I preferred to schedule the installation over the phone. Since I still had several questions (will I miss email, will I keep the same cable modem, will I have to make any configuration changes to the modem itself, etc.) I called them on the phone. I was told that they would have to shut down the Road Runner access in order to give me access to the Earthlink account, and they didn't think Road Runner could forward email but I would have to call them. I said I would call back when I got some answers. I immediately called Road Runner technical support and the tech I spoke with was pleasant but insisted that they had no way to forward email. Since I would only lose email until I got my redirection service switched over I decided that I still wanted to try Earthlink so I called the Time Warner number again. They said they could work the switch over while I was on the phone with him - the tech said he was turning my account off "on the RR server" and turning it on at Earthlink. I commented that I was surprised he could do anything to the RR server and he said something about they all worked together because they shared the TWC network. He then had me reset the cable modem and reconfigure Netscape to use mail servers named pop.earthlink.net and SMTP.earthlink.net

At that point I immediately got a welcome email from Earthlink but when I tried to send mail it said Messenger was unable to locate the server. I said that was apparently the wrong server and the tech said that he shouldn't have had me change the SMTP server because I would still be using the Road Runner SMTP server. When I questioned this he assured me this was correct, because of the sharing of services, and "they all work together as one company". I changed the configuration back to smtp-server.nc.rr.com and tried again. Now I got a message that the id/password was invalid instead of an unable to locate server message. I said it didn't look like that server knew about me any more. At that point he tried to add someone on (second level support from Earthlink I think), but I wound up listening to a menu repeat itself over and over. Eventually someone came on line with some background on my problem (apparently they talked while the menu played over and over to me - very confusing).

At any rate, they decided it was because my IP address had not been reset correctly in my cable modem. They had me reset my cable modem again and reboot the PC - and nothing changed. I told him I had a router with several PC's connected and it would probably be simpler to get it working with just one PC. He said Earthlink does not support home networks. This doesn't agree with the ads I have seen for purchasing home networking from them, but I don't need them to support my network so I didn't argue about it. I removed the router and went directly to the cable modem from the PC, resetting both the cable modem and the PC but there was still no change.

The tech asked to go over my Netscape settings with me and when he found out I was configured to "Use SSL when possible" he said that was my problem - I should never use SSL for sending email. I set it to never use SSL and the invalid id/password message went away but during this time Earthlink was passing me off to TW, and TW was passing me off to RR, who was passing me back to Earthlink. I was getting very sorry I had decided to try Earthlink. I eventually was passed on to someone who was supposed to be a high level support tech with Earthlink. He said he knew exactly what the problem was - my "IP address had not been released by the Road Runner server" - and I would have to call them. I tried to tell him that didn't look like the problem - especially since the Road Runner server was what I had been told to use, but he got huffy and would not even listen to my description of the problem - he already knew exactly what was happening. He went on to say that RR would tell me they were fixing it and it wouldn't really be fixed until the next time they booted the server - probably several days. Until then I would have to use the Earthlink web interface to send email.

By now I was beyond being sorry I had decided to switch - I was getting irate.

The Earthlink tech said I would have to call RR direct - he couldn't transfer me. I said everyone else had been transferring me between companies but he said I was wrong - they had no provisions to transfer me because Earthlink and RR were very competitive with each other and never worked together on anything - quite a different story from what I had been told before. I have to admit that this was the only tech that was unpleasant to work with - but I am disappointed that it was a tech with the company from whom I had decided to buy service.

I called RR and got a woman (everyone else had been male so I knew this was not one of the 15-20 techs I had talked to before) who verified that indeed my IP address had been released. She verified this both by checking the Road Runner SMTP server and by the responses she got from commands she sent to my cable modem. At that point she said she would transfer me to TWC for resolution. I asked her to not transfer me. I asked her instead to conference all of us together because I had already been passed back and forth well over a dozen times and it should help to have all parties talking to each other. She didn't sound happy but agreed to stay on the line. I got music on hold - hold - hold. Eventually Ed came on line - but the female tech was not there. I just about blew a gasket.

Ed was the guy that started the whole thing with the instructions for reconfiguration of Netscape – Now I knew for certain that I had gone full circle! He once again had me reset the cable modem and verified the IP address was for Earthlink instead of RR. I again said it looked to me like I was hitting the wrong SMTP server. He asked me to check the configuration and tell him what SMTP server I was using. I checked again and told him it was still set to smtp-server.nc.rr.com as he had instructed. He said I should be using an Earthlink server (this is the same guy that previously told me to go back to the RR server). I reminded him that he had me try

'smtp.earthlink.net' earlier and it hadn't worked. He said no, it should be 'mail.earthlink.net'

I bit my tongue HARD and made the change. Everything worked. I bit my tongue even harder and said thanks.

I started this cutover a little after 6:30 in the evening - it was almost 11:00 before I had email back up on the first PC. For the sake of brevity I left out lots of details about other things they thought might be causing the problem.

On the other hand, now that I have had a chance to look around I think I will like Earthlink services and features - especially the "Spaminator". I guess nobody has decent tech support any more.

FOOTNOTE:

While writing this I heard Netscape Messenger say "You've got mail" I had received a request to fill out a satisfaction survey at Earthlink. Half way through the survey my screen presented a message that the server had experienced an error – please try again later.

Field Day 2002

Field day will be at the Carroll Farm in Apex, N.C. The event begins on Saturday, June 22 , 2 PM through Sunday June 23, 2PM. Setup of Field Day stations can begin after 2PM, On Friday June 21. If you are interested in being a Band Captain or have any questions, please contact Neal Fisher at 848-8840(Raleigh) or via E-Mail N4HAF@NC.RR.COM.

TUNE IN THE RARS NEWS HOUR

- **Newsline**
- **ARRL Audio News**

Sunday Nights following the RARS 8:00 Net on 146.64

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW EXTRAS

Liz Stanley KF4UQZ and Walter Stanley KG4QHL!!!

RALEIGHRAGHEW.NET
Wednesday 9:30 145.19

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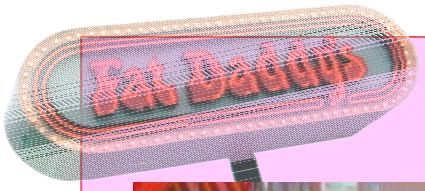

Join Us At the RARS Dinner

Every 4th Tuesday, 6:30 pm at Fat Daddy's on Glenwood Ave.

HAMFEST CALENDAR

July 6:	**Salisbury**
July 20:	**Cary**
July 27:	**Waynesville WCARS)**
August 10*:	**Fayetteville**
Aug.30/Sept 1:	**Shelby**

Courtesy of the SERA Repeater Journal

The Central Carolina Skywarn Net Meets Tuesday at 9:15 PM on 146.88 Repeater

Remember to give damage reports AFTER the storms as well as DURING the storms.